

Herb Simmens testimony on FY24 Budget

My name is Herb Simmens and live in Silver Spring. I ask that you support sufficient resources be placed in the budget to enable the county to meet its unanimously declared 2017 goal to decarbonize 80% of 2005 emissions by 2027. I testify as one of those who worked to get the council in the same resolution to declare the first climate emergency of any large government in the world.

I am alarmed at the county's grossly inadequate and anything but emergency climate action. The three major pieces of mitigation legislation passed - BEPS, Green bank energy tax funding and building electrification - were carefully designed to ensure that they would only have a minimal impact on emissions before 2027.

The climate assessment bill I first proposed four years ago and agreed to then by most council members was only adopted three long years later. Council also refused to even include mention of the 2027 goal in the Thrive 2050 plan - only the 2035 goal - a level of blatant censorship I have never seen before.

The consensus amongst climate scientists is that what the world does in the next three or four years to reduce emissions will determine the future of life on earth for the next 10,000 years.

Let me repeat that. What is done in the next three or four years will determine the future of life on earth for the next 10,000 years.

Yet I have written to each of you at least twice asking that you undertake a comprehensive review of progress being made - as it is five years into the 10 year period - to reach the 2027 goal. Most of you never even responded.

if you are not willing to fund and legislate what is necessary to meet the 2027 goal then you be honest with the public and modify or eliminate the 80% goal.

Thank you.